IBAL'S TOP TOWN IN GALWAY

By Liam Timmins

Ballinasloe received an excellent result on the recent Irish Business Against Litter (IBAL) survey, being tied at 13th for cleanest town or city in Ireland and cleanest in County Galway. Six out of the ten sites examined received the highest grade of an A and, more significantly, there were no seriously littered areas.

The R348 Athenry Approach and R357 Roscommon Approach Road were highlighted for having a virtual absence of litter along both routes, although the pavement along the Athenry route was cracked in some areas.

The Famine Remembrance Park was commended for its mature trees, and open grass space but criticized for one bin considered old or damaged. Creagh National School and Kilgarve Gardens were complimented for their appearance and conditions. All these sites gained an A in the IBAL survey.

The La Poer Trench Monument, Ballinasloe Library and the Bring Facility received a B+, being praised for their presentation but marked down for the presence of some litter. The Main Street gained a B which was downgraded due to food and cigarette waste, however being congratulated for its positive condition regarding paving, bollards, markings, street bins and ornamental trees.

The outcome of this National Survey and Adjudicators reports was overall positive encouraging news for the town. An Taisce, the group who conducted these surveys for IBAL, stated that this was "an excellent result for Ballinasloe".

Much of this solid progress can be attributed the volunteers and indeed to Ballinasloe Municipal Council and their workers who have been active in maintaining to the town. Ballinasloe Tidy Towns Chair Tom Madden congratulated all who continue to help make it all happen.

"I wish to sincerely thank all volunteers, individuals who while out and about on walks volunteer with litter picks and report instances of litter blackspots to us. Members of residents' associations deserve great credit as they work tirelessly keeping their estates and residential areas clean, tidy and well maintained. Galway County Council, Municipal District Area Workers and Support Staff – are to be applauded as well - Ballinasloe Friends of the Environment (a recently formed sub-group) that has hit the ground running last Autumn with a wild flower seed planting initiative in the Poolboy area. Ballinasloe Training for Employment is a local DSP Community Employment project, who in partnership with Ballinasloe Community Service Probation Project continues to provide expertise in ground maintenance and litter control in targeted areas of Ballinasloe and its environs" stated Tom.

The Tidy Towns are considering Monday, February 13th, @ 7pm for their AGM, but has yet to be finally decided. Additionally, the group hopes to organise clean-up Saturdays within the town, for Feb 11th & 25th, March 11th & 25th.

If anyone would like to become involved with the volunteer effort, they can contact Tom at (086) 817 9580.

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